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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 002812

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [TU](#) [CY](#)

SUBJECT: TURKEY/CYPRUS: TURKS ENCOURAGED BY FREE FLOW OF
PEOPLE ON ISLAND BUT WORRIED GREEK CYPRIOTS TRYING TO
UNDERMINE UNFICYP

(U) Classified by DCM Robert S. Deutsch. Reason: 1.5 (b,d).

1. (C) Summary: Turkish MFA is encouraged by the flow of people between the two sides on Cyprus and plans to open additional gates. Nevertheless, MFA is concerned that the Greek Cypriots are attempting to restrict UNFICYP's important role in the buffer zone, which would undermine the current positive atmosphere on the island. End summary.

2. (C) MFA Cyprus DG Ertugrul Apakan summoned US and UK reps to discuss the flow of people between the two sides. Apakan averred that Turkey views positively the large numbers of people who have traveled to the north and south. Noting that there has been only one security incident thus far, Apakan explained that according to Turkish figures since April 23, 107,125 Greek Cypriots and 29,613 Turkish Cypriots have crossed to the other side. Turkey wants to maintain the current positive atmosphere on Cyprus and has no intention to rescind allowing passage between the two sides, he said.

3. (C) Apakan noted that Turkish Cypriot authorities are now allowing tourists to stay in the north for three days and plan to open a total of four gates on the Turkish Cypriot side. In response to DCM's query on where Turkish policies will lead, Apakan replied that Turkey wants to remove barriers to a lasting, negotiated solution. Apakan cited what he said was F.M. Gul's recent statement in Brussels that Turkey "wants to bridge gaps and differences based on the Annan Plan" but stopped short of embracing the UNSYG's plan.

4. (C) Nevertheless, Apakan noted, there are unsubstantiated reports that some groups are trying to create provocations that could spoil the current environment. Apakan claimed that unions are attempting to organize potentially destabilizing demonstrations on May 1 and that Greek Cypriot motorcyclists may plan some unspecified "unhelpful" action.

5. (C) Even more troubling to Turkey, Apakan explained, is an apparent statement by the Greek Cypriot Interior Minister calling for UNFICYP to cease its role in regulating the buffer zones between border gates. Apakan explained that although they do not perform any inspections themselves, UN peacekeepers in the buffer zone play a vital role in facilitating the free passage of Greek and Turkish Cypriots between sides -- a role, he said, which is within the existing UNFICYP mandate. Apakan repeatedly stressed that GOT wants UNFICYP to stay and maintain its current functions.

He further noted that Turkish missions abroad will be contacting USG, UN, and UK officials to convey Turkish sensitivities. We indicated that the U.S. would continue to support UNFICYP fulfilling its mandate and promised to inform the Dept and USUN of Turkey's concerns.

PEARSON